SOCIAL CONSTRUCTION OF GENDER ROLES AND IDENTITY FORMATION AMONG GENDER NON-CONFORMERS: A SOCIOLOGICAL STUDY OF LGBT IN DELHI CITY

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INTRODUCTION

The world is divided into binary system of gender conformity which forms a stereotype; and anything which disrupts this stereotype is perceived as deviation and consequently leads to social disapproval which results in social exclusion and marginalization. Gender roles are socio-culturallyconstructed and society always quite unitedly tries to reinforce the binary system primarily through the institution of family (socialization) and society (division of labor on the basis of gender).

Human tendency to stereotype and generalize on the basis of the majoritarian believes has been a matter of debate since the time immemorial. The views on the matter of sexual and gender orientation follows the same story. There exist a sense of confusion between the terms sex and gender and sometimes these are used interchangeably while they are non-synonymous in nature and their meaning can be quite varied as sex refers to biological orientation and gender correspond to sociological one.

There exist a multitude of gender combinations but under the guise of social obligations and predisposed norms the system is portrayed as a vague set of binary categories like men and women, masculine and feminine, male and female. Each singular in this binary system has specified roles which may vary from society to society. Deviating from the binary classification is not perceived as normal and invite sanctions from society against the deviation.

However, irrespective of all the consequences certain individuals do not see themselves fitting in conventional binary classification and thus are exposed to a wide range of possibilities. These are labeled as gender non-conformers and more popularly as LGBT community where L and S stand for homosexual category of lesbian and gay while B is for bisexuality and T representing transgenders. These all sets are very unique in themselves and also subjected to prejudice of the majoritarian belief. Thus, these groups experience a great deal of challenges as they are not accepted by the society which in driven by strict taboos.

The complex interplay of light and shadow will always be present between society and individuals. The accommodation of differential types of gender and sexual orientation within the framework of society is a big challenge as social reform has its own pace and for it to reach every single mind it will take a little more time. But with the rise of individualism the trend of respecting one's own choice even if it is completely non-synchronized with the majority, the peaceful and equal environment for the gender non-conformers can be sighted in near future.

The role of media is immense for propagating the gender variant envelope. The famous television series "The L word" which followed the lives of several lesbian, bisexual, and transgendered women living in Los Angeles, California; and the series entitled "Queer as Folk" follows the life of five gay men living in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Also the popularity of Neil Patrick Harris an American homosexual actor who played a very opposite role of a womanizer in the famous series called "How I Met Your Mother".Even the Indian movie 'Aligarh' was critically acclaimed for supporting homosexual rights. These attempts pushed the envelope of non-conformity and gave an opportunity to the gender non-conformers to feel socially accepted.

Focusing on the challenges, pressures and prejudices experienced by individuals to maintain binary enactments of gender where they are not free to express what is their real self and always presumed to be what society expects them to be. The gender non-conformity is not a new concept and is experienced throughout the human history and inception of human society. The

only way in which we can achieve equal rights for each one of us is positive campaigning and providing proper education about the different gender/sexual orientation and roles without scandalizing them as being something obscure.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

INTERNATIONAL STUDIES

Freud(1940)in his work*"The development of the sexual function",* said that the battle of sexes between the well-recognized categories seems to be legitimate and looked upon as natural and healthy while this is not the case with the minorities whose gender and sexual orientation is rather complicated. However, in views of the specialists like Sigmund Freud and Alfred Kinsey the tale does have a different narration. According to Freud sexual life does not begin at puberty, but starts with clear manifestations soon after birth. Sexual life comprising the function of obtaining pleasure from zones of the body –a function which is subsequently brought into the service of that of reproduction, but the two functions often fail to coincide completely. According to him, all human beings are polymorphously perverse.

Lehmiller(2013)in his book "*The psychology of human sexuality",* said that the human can derive sexual pleasure from almost anything and when it comes to sexual attraction, everyone is inherently bisexual, possessing the capacity to develop attraction to men or to women. Similarly, Alfred Kinseyhad searched for the traits and levels of homosexuality and heterosexuality in individuals through a typical scale.

Ratings	**Sexuality levels**
0	Exclusively heterosexual
1	Mostly heterosexual incidentally homosexual
2	Mostly heterosexual with significant homosexual experience
3	Equally heterosexual and homosexual
4	Mostly homosexual with significant heterosexual experience
5	Mostly homosexual incidentally heterosexual
6	Exclusively homosexual

Source: Wiley Blackwell's: The Psychology of Human Sexuality (Lehmiller, 2013).

Kinsey thus, characterized sexuality as a very flexible thing although, he failed to explain or measure asexuality which is the absence of any sought of attractive feeling towards either sex. These approaches of Freud and Kinsey portrayed gender and sexuality in a very paradoxical manner where there can be numerous combinations of them in contract with the binary system of differentiation.

The *gender non-conformer* categories are widely misunderstood and confused with each other. But there is a marked difference in all the categories with few incidences of overlapping as well. Hence, LGBT comprises of lesbian-women and gay-men who conform to the binary model of gender but opposes the same in terms of their sexuality as they both seems to be attracted by the members of their own sex and are popularly called as homosexuals. The 'B' stands for bisexual who feels attracted towards members of both the sexes but conform to a stereotypical gender as male or a female.

Lippa (2006)in his work*"Is high sex drive associated with increased sexual attraction to both sexes? It depends on whether you are male or female",*said that the homosexuals are present in

both the stereotyped genders but there is slight difference between the orientation pattern as data from three studies assessing a total of 3,645 participants show that for most women, high sex drive is associated with increased sexual attraction to both men and women. For men, however high sex drive is associated with increased sexual attraction to any one sex or the other, depending on the individual sexual orientation. The results suggest that the correlates of sex drive and the organization of sexual and sexual orientation are different for women and men.

Carroll et al (2002)in their work*"Counseling transgendered, transsexual, and gender-variant clients",* said that however, the most interesting category resides in the letter 'T' which stands for transgender. The term transgender was coined in the late 1980s, by men who did not find the label transvestite adequate enough to describe their desire to live as women. The transgenders are gender non-conforming and believed to be born in wrong body i.e. women in a men body and vice versa. There are two categories of transgenders; the one who does not change their sex through sex-reversal surgeries because many traditionally gender-identified persons did not necessarily want to reconfigure their bodies surgically and hormonally and did not share the desire to pass or to fit into normative gender categories of male and female and the other who make this change to fit their gender identity with their body, the latter category is referred to as transsexuals.

Totman (2011)in his work *"The third sex: Kathoey: Thailand's ladyboys",*said that the very popular form of transgenders which is often glamourized is the lady-boy of Thailand, they have long been a part of Thailand's cultural landscape and the term use for transgender in Thailand is Kathoey. However, this change may result into serious consequences as changing one's natural anatomy may pose difficulties in a variety of ways, like; testosterone is the crucial hormone in female-to-male (FtM) transsexuals for the development of secondary sexual characteristics of the desired gender.

Shao et al (2011)in their work *"Breast cancer in female-to-male transsexuals: two cases with a review of physiology and management",* said that a major safety concern is whether testosterones have a stimulatory effect on the breast that can increase the risk of developing breast cancer. These all are the examples of sexuality and gender non-conformity in a psychological sense. However, there are categories which implies for biological and congenital conditions leading to non-conformity and some of these are sexchromosome mosaicism, male-pseudo-hermaphroditism, klinefelter syndrome, etc.

Kane (2006)in his work *"No way my boys are going to be like that!" Parents" responses to children's gender nonconformity",* said that the societal beliefs of a dominant sex and gender also shape the attitude towards the nonconformity. Parents welcome what they perceive as gender non-conformity among their young daughters, while their responses in relation to sons are more complex. Many parents across racial and class background accept or encourage some tendencies they consider atypical for boys, but this acceptance is balanced by efforts to approximate hegemonic ideals of masculinity.

Sanders (1996)in his work *"Getting lesbian and gay issues on the international human rights agenda",* said that towards the non-conformers the society is harsh and hostile and it also distance itself from them, because there is a general belief that it is only through societal marginalization and hostility of non-conformers the accepted stereotype will be reinforced effectively and allowing them to break the stereotype will only lead to social imbalance as their beliefs may turn contagious. The fear of society towards homosexuals in called as homophobia

and towards transgenders as transphobia. While homophobia is increasingly compared to racism and sexism, discrimination against lesbian women and gay men is much more widely accepted then other forms of discrimination. Heterosexually identified individuals are effectively discouraged from raising lesbian and gay issues because their own sexuality might be put in question.

Nagoshi et al (2008)in their work*"Gender differences in correlates of homophobia and transphobia",*said that in a study in US for both sexes, transphobia and homophobia were highly correlated with each other and with right wing authoritarianism, religious fundamentalism.

Clarke et al (1989)in their work *"Institutional religion and gay/lesbian oppression",*said, Although, talking about the religious fundamentalism, while gay men and lesbians have been consistently involved in the institutional forms of Judeao-Christianity throughout history, those institutions have themselves failed to accept or support openly gay individuals or couples, either professionally, liturgically/pastorally, or doctrinally. It has instead encouraged homophobia in society thereby fostering antigay oppression which dehumanizes gay individuals, undermines gay coupling, and exacerbates familial tensions between gay and non-gay relatives.

Tomsen and Mason (2001) in their work *"Engendering homophobia: Violence, sexuality and gender conformity",* said that a contemporary social movement understanding violence against gay men and lesbians as "homophobic" suggests a solid basis for coalitionist action. But important aspects of the imposition of gender conformity are a common thread in the experience of female, male and transsexual victims and the motives of perpetrators.

Norton (1975)in his work *"Prejudice against homosexuals",*said that the societal pressure may be immense, but most homosexuals get their first experience of prejudice within the family, it becomes difficult for homosexuals either to put trust in a supportive community or to withhold trust from an outside enemy (). It is only recently that anti-homosexual attitudes within society are labeled as a prejudice as it was perceived as correct and socializing behavior in the past.

Bockting (2014)in his work*"The impact of stigma on transgender identity development and mental health",* said that the existence of transgender and gender-nonconforming people has been documented throughout history and across many cultures. In the twentieth century, transgender expression becomes medicalized and sex-reassignment become available, initially enforcing a binary understanding of sex/gender, evading the social stigma attached to gender non-conformity.

Gagné and Tewksbury (1988)in their work *"Conformity pressures and gender resistance among transgendered individuals",* said that the research on transgendered individuals has tended to come from medical, psychiatric, or deviance perspectives, with little attention to the social context in which these individuals exist or their efforts to resist normative expectations of sex and gender.

Burdge (2007)in his work *"Bending gender, ending gender: Theoretical foundations for social work practice with the transgender community",*said that the gender is a ubiquitous social construct that wields power over every individual in our society. The traditional dichotomous gender paradigm is oppressive, especially for transgendered people whose sense of themselves as gendered people is incongruent with the gender they were assigned at birth.

McKirnan and Peterson (1989)in their work*"Alcohol and drug use among homosexual men and women: Epidemiology and population characteristics",*said that the homosexual men and women and even transgenders are socially disintegrated and thus, as a result of this disintegration may suffer from depression and other psychotic conditions and thus revert to the consumption of sedatives and drugs. They have been described as at high risk for alcohol and drug abuse, due to psychological variables such as stress levels or the cultural importance of bar settings. In a study there was a substantially higher proportions of the homosexuals sample used alcohol, marijuana, or cocaine than was in the case in the general population.

McDermott (2008) in his work *"Avoiding shame: young LGBT people, homophobia and self-destructive behaviours",* said that the International evidence demonstrates that there are elevated rates of suicide and alcohol abuse amongst lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) youth. Also, data from interviews and focus groups with young LGBT participants suggest a strong link between homophobia and self-destructive behaviors. Thus, suicide cases amongst LGBT youths correspond to their social disintegration as their orientation of sex and gender does not let them mix with a larger lot of societal framework and restrict their surroundings to a very narrow and shallow domain. The suicide is driven by low self-confidence and high level of stress and anxiety. The suicidal conditions of LGBT youths in terms of Emile Durkheim projects towards Egoistic type of suicide.

Weiss (2004)in his work *"The archaeology of biphobia and transphobia within the US gay and lesbian community",*said that the conflict is not only between stereotyped and gender non-conformer, but there exist an inherent sense of identity within the subgroups of the non-conformers community which leads to prejudice. Heterosexism against bisexuals and transgenders exist not only in the straight community, but in the gay and lesbian community as well. As the LGBT community developed, power relations arose which resulted in the four different groups (L/G/B/T), assigning them different social locations, prejudice in gay and lesbian communities against bisexuals and transgenders is heterosexism because it is among other things, an accommodationist to attempt to disavow these more radical forms of sexuality.

Bockting et al (2009)in their work *"Gay and bisexual identity development among female-to-male transsexuals in North America: Emergence of a transgender sexuality",*said that there is even intra-category conflict as it was found in a North American study, where, a sample of female to male (FtM) transsexuals were sexually attracted to men, aiming their identity and sexuality in context of a culture of transgender empowerment. This may even put to question the very need of their reversal and may give the status of mental problem back to the transgenders.

Block et al (1981)in their work *"Parental agreement-disagreement on child-rearing orientations and gender-related personality correlates in children",*said that to live in a society and to differ from the majority is itself an invitation for prejudices and challenges. Thus, the LGBT community is highly vulnerable and is always susceptible to a multitude of challenges and problems. Likewise, there is an allegation on homosexuals for them not fitting well for parenting. The quality of the parental relationship has been implicated increasingly over the past two decades as a factor contributing to the social and emotional development of the child.

Stacey and Biblarz (2001)in their work *"(How) does the sexual orientation of parents matter?",*said that however, opponents of lesbian and gay parental rights claims that children with lesbian-gay parents are at higher risk for a variety of negative outcomes. Yet most research

in psychology concludes that there are no differences in developmental outcomes between children raised by lesbian-gay parents and those raised by heterosexual parents.

Zambrano (2007)in his work*"Unthinkable" parenthoods: homosexual, transvestite, and transsexual mothers and fathers",*said that the growing number of families formed by homosexual, transvestite (cross dresser) and transsexual fathers/mothers has not only become a social, but also socio-anthropological fact, requiring traditional convictions to be rethought. The diversity of family configuration present in other societies permits us to affirm that kinship and affiliation are always social in nature, not being merely derived procreation. Thus, new kinds of parenthood bring about the need of amending and stretching the rules of kinship, marriage and family.

Taylor and Peter (2011) *"Every class in every school: Final report on the first national climate survey on homophobia, biphobia, and transphobia in Canadian schools"*, mentioned that the 2009 Canadian Climate Survey reported that 59 percent of LGBT (lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgendered) high school students had been subject to verbal harassment at school compared to 7 percent of non-LGBT students, 25 percent had been subject to physical harassment compared to 8 percent of non-LGBT students, 31 percent had been subject to cyber-bullying (via internet or text messaging) compared to 8 percent of non-LGBT students, 73 percent felt unsafe at school compared to 20 percent of non-LGBT students, and 51 percent felt unaccepted at school compared to 19 percent of non-LGBT students.

INDIAN STUDIES

Pandya (2011)in his study *"Psycho-Socio-Cultural Issues of Men Who Have Sex with Men in Gujarat, India",*said that the homosexuality in Indian society is considered inappropriate and shrouded in secrecy. Identity finds its roots in self-perceptions in relation to specific social setting and the subjective adoption of a role or roles by an individual. Certainly negative notions about homosexuality create a dilemma for homosexually oriented men to choose gender and sexual roles and appropriate identities.

Agoramoorthy and Minna (2007)in their work *"India's homosexual discrimination and health consequences",*said that the most significant problem of the sexual/gender minorities is of a legal permit to portray who they are. A large number of countries worldwide have legalized homosexual rights. South Africa was the first country to constitutionally safeguard the rights of homosexuals in 1994. But ever since India was a British colony Section 377 of the Indian Penal Code (IPC) of 1860 defines homosexuality as a crime punishable by imprisonment. The outdated law violates the fundamental rights of homosexuals in India. Despite the fact that literature drawn from Hindu, Buddhist, Muslim, and modern fiction testify to the presence of same-sex love in various forms, homosexuality is still considered a taboo in India, by both the society and the government. The subject of homosexuality has traveled globally during the last few decades through the perseverance of criminality, sickness, immorality and now finally to alternative form of lifestyle. India's leading politicians and policy makers ignore the rights of homosexuals, for instance, when a journalist asked the then Prime Minister, Man-Mohan Singh about allowing the gay marriage in Canada, he replied that there would not be much appreciation for a law like that in India. The Indian coordinator for UNAIDS stated that treating homosexuals as criminals increases stigma and therefore hinders the fight against HIV/AIDS. The existence of homosexuality law is a stumbling block to prevent gay men from coming forward to test for HIV/AIDS.

Caceres and Griensven (1994)in their work *"Male homosexual transmission of HIV-1",*said that the homosexuals are more prone to HIV/AIDS as it is much easier to get HIV infection from anal sex as presence of (micro-traumatic) lesions in the oral, rectal or urethral mucosa that permits direct blood-bloodstream or secretions-bloodstream contact.

Pandya and Pandya (2013)in their work *"Socio-cultural Context and Sexual Health Risks of Men who have Sex with Men (MSM) and their Female Partners in Gujarat, India",*said that in Indian society, having sexual relationship with people of the same sex is considered abnormal. Homosexual behavior are seen in society as immoral, dirty, and unnatural. As a result, these behaviors are secretly practiced without adequate knowledge about safe sexual practices; hence, men who have sex with men (MSM) tend to be more vulnerable to sexually transmitted infections (STIs) and host of psychiatric morbidities.

Pandya (2011)in his study *"Psycho-Socio-Cultural Issues of Men Who Have Sex with Men in Gujarat, India",* said that in a study of homosexual men in Gujarat it was found that eleven respondents mentioned that they were confused with their own self sex feelings, attraction and interests in same-sex sexual activities. One respondent with bisexual orientation said, "I feel bad for my feelings for other men, and sexual activities I do. I do not know why god has made me such". Other respondent who identified him as *koti* stated, "People laugh on my effeminate behavior. I try to become like other men but I just can't, sometimes I can't control my feelings and desires to cross-dress. I want to stop cross-dressing, sex with other men but I can't stop." Such experiences often lead to the development of dual self-identities. Duality in turn creates an identity confusion and role conflict which is usually expressed through non-acceptance of one's sexuality, secret homosexual activities, risky sexual behaviors, multiple sexual relationships, self-destructive behavior, substance abuse, unstable relationships, and internalization of homophobia. All unmarried men in the study concurred that they want to marry, and desire to father a child. Fathering a child is demonstration of proven manhood and the fulfillment of one of the social requirements of married men. Married men shared reasons for their marriages. Primary reasons were parental pressure and their own conviction with the notion of heterosexual marriage. They had fear if they had not married, it would defame their parents' status; and siblings would not be able to marry. This itself show invisible layer of internal stigma associated with own homosexual orientation and self-discrimination as the biggest personal barrier in development of healthy sexual identity.

Mukesh and Bansal (2010)in their work *"Initial homosexual experiences of MSM in Surat city",*said that a cross-sectional study among 200 men having sex with men in Surat city explores their initial MSM experiences. Findings in a study reveal that MSM are sexually active with slightly more bisexual than homosexual. The discussion revealed that slightly over half (53%) MSM were bisexual followed by 47% who engaged solely in homosexual relationships in line with varying patterns of homosexual and bisexual. Though many of the respondents had reported of heterosexual attraction, the majority perceived themselves as feminine and felt attraction towards males. Many of the MSM had realized their sexual inclinations after marriage and some were forced into heterosexual marriages by their parents and therefore their bisexual inclinations. The majority (57%) had reported of their first homosexual encounter while playing with friends, resembling the findings of Deb et al in 2009, which reported that, a male friend was the first sexual partner in majority of the cases (50.9%) among the MSM. An important finding is that many were forced or raped into their first MSM experience by cousin, friend or elders and caretakers.

Nanda (1986)in his work *"The Hijras of India: Cultural and individual dimensions of an institutionalized third gender role",*said that talking about another interesting category of *Gender non-conformers* is the Indian form of transgender called as Hijra. The Hijra(eunuch/transvestite) is an institutionalized third gender in India. They are neither male nor female, but contain elements of both.

Kalra (2012)in his work *"Hijras: the unique transgender culture of India",*said that Indian society has been tolerant of diverse sexual identities and sexual behaviors as is evident from its mythologies and ancient scripts like the Kama sutra. The transgendered Hijra community has evolved to form a unique within Indian society, existing alongside the ubiquitous heterosexual family. Some of the aspects of their lives such as their social structure and attaining of Nirvan (emasculation, not to be confused with nirvana), may intrigue the ones researching psychology. They are believed to possess sacred powers and their blessing is considered as most divine and thus they appear in a very dramatic manner in Indian weddings and other ceremonies. Their livelihood is generated through the donations they receive as a gift of their blessings.

Loh (2011)in his work *"'Borrowing'Religious Identifications: A Study of Religious Practices among the Hijras of India",*said that the stories of sexual variation in ancient Hindu texts give hijras a measure of mythological and historical legitimization; this Hindu textual affirmation inevitably influences their religious practices. The most important goddess for the hijras is the Mother Goddess, specifically in the form of Bahuchara Mata. It is in her name that hijras perform their ritual function by giving blessings of fertility or prosperity to a newborn child or married couple, and in her temple in Gujarat they act as servants of the Mother goddess.

Soman (2013)in his work *"Penal laws and rights of transgender: International perspective with special reference to Section 377 of the Indian Penal Code, 1860",*said that In India, transgender earn their daily bread by begging, performing religious ceremonies and most painfully through sexual work and it is unfortunate that the society is least bothered about the psyche of their fellow human beings. When society gets the information that a person is transgender, they face social ostracism within and outside family. So most of them will not be able to complete their studies and there is no employment opportunity for them. These all add to their vulnerability. State mechanisms of police who are considered to be the protectors of rights are unfortunately becoming predatory of their rights.

STUDIES ON GENDER IDENTITY

Ryle (2011)in his work *"Questioning gender: A sociological exploration",*said that the gender orientation refers to a person's emotional and sexual attraction to a particular sex (male or female). Gender orientation is typically divided into four categories: *heterosexuality*, the attraction to individuals of the opposite sex; *homosexuality*, the attraction to individuals of one's own sex; *bisexuality*, the attraction to individuals of either sex; and *asexuality*, no attraction to either sex. Heterosexuals and homosexuals may also be referred to informally as "straight" and "gay," respectively.

Poasa (1992)in his work *"The Samoan fa'afafine: One case study and discussion of transsexualism",*said that the dichotomous view of gender (the notion that one is either male or female) is specific to certain cultures and is not universal. In some cultures, gender is viewed as fluid. In the past, some anthropologists used the term *berdache* to refer to individuals who occasionally or permanently dressed and lived as the opposite gender. The practice has been noted among certain Aboriginal groups (Jacobs, Thomas, and Lang 1997). Samoan culture

accepts what they refer to as a "third gender." *Fa'afafine*, which translates as "the way of the woman," is a term used to describe individuals who are born biologically male but embody both masculine and feminine traits. Fa'afafines are considered an important part of Samoan culture. Individuals from other cultures may mislabel them as homosexuals because fa'afafines have a varied sexual life that may include men or women.

Individuals who identify with the role that is the opposite of their biological sex are called transgendered. Transgendered males, for example, have such a strong emotional and psychological connection to the feminine aspects of society that they identify their gender as female. The parallel connection to masculinity exists for transgendered females.

APA (2008)in its work *"Answers to Your Questions: For a Better Understanding of Sexual Orientation and Homosexuality",*said that the transgendered individuals who wish to alter their bodies through medical interventions such as surgery and hormonal therapy—so that their physical being is better aligned with different gender identity—are called transsexuals. They may also be known as male-to-female (MTF) or female-to-male (FTM) transsexuals. Not all transgender individuals choose to alter their bodies: many will maintain their original anatomy but may present themselves to society as the opposite gender. This is typically done by adopting the dress, hairstyle, mannerisms, or other characteristic typically assigned to the opposite gender. It is important to note that people who cross-dress, or wear clothing that is traditionally assigned to opposite gender, are not necessarily transgendered. Cross-dressing is typically a form of self-expression, entertainment, or personal style, not necessarily an expression against one's assigned gender.

Research Gaps

1. There is a lack of studies on the different causes and circumstances in which relationships are socially constructed and established between different categories of LGBTs and how they come in contact with each other.
2. There is a lack of sociological studies on social construction of gender identity formation of gender non-conformers (LGBTs).
3. There is a lack of research on the intra-group tensions among the LGBT communities themselves.
4. There is lack of multidimensional and interdisciplinary research in gender studies as they are viewed separately as psychological or social issue.

THEORITICAL APPROACHES ON GENDER DYNAMICS

There are various theories of gender socialization and how children learn gender identity, when they become aware that the two sexes (male and female) behave differently. Some of the theoretical approaches are as follows:

Sociological Theory for Social Constructionism of Gender Identity Formation

Social Constructionism Approach

According to the Social Construction of Reality given by Peter L. Berger and Thomas Luckmann, the central concept is that people and groups interacting in a social system create, over time, concepts or mental representations of each other's actions, and that these concepts eventually become habituated into reciprocal roles played by the actors in relation to each other.

When these roles are made available to other members of society to enter into and play out, the reciprocal interactions are said to be institutionalized. In the process, meaning is embedded in society. Knowledge and people's conceptions (and beliefs) of what reality is become embedded in the institutional fabric of society. Reality is therefore said to be socially constructed.

According to this view, gender roles are created by society and culture, and these roles are considered as appropriate or ideal behavior for a person of that specific sex. Some argue that the differences in behavior between men and women are entirely social conventions, whereas others believe that behavior is influenced by universal biological factors to varying degrees of extent.

Sociological Theories (Stereotypical gender roles)

Functionalist Approach for Gender

Lindsey (2011) said that as we know that functionalist approach holds society with the interdependent parts which constitute the whole. So, gender in this approach, gets place in very functional way which is formed in the beginning of history. Ancient times, there was very useful and efficient division of labor between men and women, in hunter and gatherer societies have men as hunter and outsider, women as mother, nurse and housekeeping.

Giddens (2009) said that According to functionalists, this division of labor derives from biological differences between men and women, also Murdock held this issue as, sexual division of labor exists in every culture and it is not a result of biological "programming" but a logical basis for organizing in society.

Parsons & Bales (1956) said, Parsons, one of the leaders of functionalist thinker, claims that acting according to proper roles for man and woman in the family also help for socialization of children. He mentioned from the roles as instrumental role - providing shelters, food etc- for father and expressive role –providing care and security for children, emotional support- for mother.

Conflict Theory in Gender

Macionis (2010) said that According to Engel, capitalism makes male dominance more powerful, and he has explained this claim in three states. Firstly, capitalism provides power for men by giving them chance in order to have high income and private property. Secondly, women became the consumer part of society, because they do not produce, but get money from their husband and spend for satisfy their need or enjoy. Thirdly, capitalism divides men and women in working way. It puts men to factory and women to house, however, it does not pay for women's workings in the house, but pays for men for his working in factory, so it puts importance to male's job by paying money.

Symbolic Interaction Theory in Gender

Lindsey (2011) said that the Symbolic Interaction Theory claims that concepts such as – race, ethnicity or gender – are not naturally and objectively existed, but they occurred through society. Society named "females" or "males" are endowed with distinct character features defined as feminine or masculine. Gender does not exist by self, but with the interaction among

people in society. So, they claim that, society is "doing" gender, and they show as an example Erving Goffman's "Dramaturgy" study.

According to Goffman's explanation, we have some roles inside of us and when their time comes, we use them in front of the stage. Thus, gender is one of our roles and we present them as male and female in society.

Oxford American Dictionary (2010) said that the Symbolic interactionism aims to understand human behavior by analyzing the critical role of symbols in human interaction. Because the meanings attached to symbols are socially created and not natural, and fluid, not static, we act and react to symbols based on the current assigned meaning. The word *gay*, for example, once meant "cheerful," but by the 1960s it carried the primary meaning of "homosexual." In transition, it was even known to mean "careless" or "bright and showing". Furthermore, the word *gay* (as it refers to a homosexual) carried a somewhat negative and unfavorable meaning 50 years ago, but has since gained more neutral and even positive connotations.

Psychological Theories(Identity of gender non-conformers)

Psychodynamic Theory

Psychodynamic theory is the oldest perspective on sexuality in the field and is credited to Sigmund Freud. He believed that our gender identity develops as a result of strong but unconscious sexual urges we have as a child. Between the ages of three and five a child will go through what he regards as the *phallic stage* in which he/she will develop strong sexual urges towards the parent of the opposite sex and therefore great jealously towards the parent of the same sex. A normally developing child will resolve this conflict by identifying with the parent of the same sex and copying his/her behavior.

The Oedipus complex: This is the name given to the unconscious dilemma a boy experiences when he is very young. During the *phallic stage* he develops an attraction towards his mother and a fear of his father, who he believes may castrate him. In other words he is torn in two directions. In order to prevent the castration he rejects his mother and identifies with his father. He does this by aping his behavior and copying his masculine characteristics.

The Electra complex: This is the name given to the unconscious dilemma a girl experiences when she is between three and five years old. During the phallic stage she develops an attraction towards her father and a fear that she will lose her mother's love. In order to keep her mother's love she rejects her father and identifies with her mother. She does this by aping her behavior and copying her feminine characteristics. In this way female behavior is transferred from one generation to another.

Gender disturbances: Freud believed that children who were brought up in households where one parent is absent are likely to have a much weaker sense of gender identity. He went even further by claiming that a boy brought up without a father is likely to develop into a homosexual. Recent research by *Rekers and Moray (1990)* also suggested that boys who grow up without a father-figure are more likely to have gender disturbances

Social Learning Theory

In 1941 *Miller and Dollard* proposed the theory of social learning. In 1963,*Bandura and Walters* broadened the social learning theory with the principles of observational learning and vicarious reinforcement.

Unlike Freud's psychoanalytic approach, which focus on internal conflicts in socialization, social learning theory focuses on observable behavior. For social learning theorists like *Albert Bandura*, socialization is based on rewards (reinforcing appropriate behavior) and punishments (extinguishing inappropriate behavior). As with other behaviors gender roles are learned directly through observation and imitation. In gender socialization, different expectations lead to differential reinforcement from parents, peers, and teachers for doing either boy or the girl thing.

Gender identity is developed when children associate the label of boy or girl with the rewards that come with the appropriate behavior and then act out gender roles according to that perception. According to social learning theory, boy and girls are not parallel in the acquisition of gender role knowledge during the primary socialization years. Because fathers are not as available as mothers during early childhood, boys have limited opportunity to model the same gender parent. Thus in early childhood boys struggle to put together definition of masculinity based on incomplete information. They are often told what they should not do than what they should do, "don't be sissies" and the classic "big boys don't cry" are examples. Girls on the other hand have an easier time because of the continuous contact with the mother. The lack of exposure to males at an early age leads boys to view masculinity in a stereotypical manner. Male express more insecurity about their gender identity and cross gender behavior in boys ("sissies") is viewed more negatively than what it occurs in girls ("tomboys").

Cognitive Development Theory

The major proponents of *cognitive development theory* were *Jean Piaget* and *Lawrence Kohlberg*. According to cognitive developmental theory, gender identity is postulated as the basic organizer and regulator of children's gender learning. Children develop the stereotypic conceptions of gender from what they see and hear around them. Once they achieve gender constancy -- the belief that their own gender is fixed and irreversible -- they positively value their gender identity and seek to behave only in ways that are congruent with that conception

Cognitive development explanations for gender socialization contrast sharply with social learning theory. *Jean Piaget* (1896-1980) took interest in how children gradually develop intelligence; thinking and reasoning laid the foundation for cognitive development theory. His work is consistent with symbolic interaction theory regarding his ideas that cognitive abilities are developed in stages through ongoing social interaction. Behavior depends on how a person perceives a social situation at each cognitive stage. Cognitive theory stresses a child's active role in structuring and interpreting the world.

Social Cognitive Theory

Social cognitive theory was propounded by *Albert Bandura*in 1986. This theory taps into the strong points of all previous theories to understand the degree to which the children actively choose their gender roles and how much imitation and reinforcement are needed for gender roles to be learned. This theory has been used to explain the connection between gender and the selection of sports role models. As predicted by the social learning theory that girl and boys nominate role models of their own gender. However, girls often pick males rather than females. Social cognitive theory explains these choices according to the image of sports as a male domain and the level of influence wielded by men in the domain. When combined with the symbolic interaction perspective, this theory provides a good foundation for interdisciplinary approaches to gender role socialization.

Of all the theory of gender socialization, social cognitive theory appears to offer the best integrative model to explain contradictory research results on gender related to the influence of a child choice of role models.

STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

Both men and women are expected to behave in a socio-culturally accepted normative manner but occasionally we find a deviation from the conventional gender behavior patterns among some individuals. The process begins in infancy and continues throughout our lives. Although these beliefs are informative, providing a road map for our interactions with others. However, not all members of society adhere to such a tidy distinction of gender orientation and roles even in the situation of extreme prejudice and marginalization because one cannot typically portray the opposite of what they feel for their entire lifetime as gender is the expression of their identity and living with a wrong set of gender is like walking with a wrong fit of shoes.

The so called gender non-conformers are a reality in every part of the world. Their gender orientation isaffecting their human rights and an attempt is foreseen to look beyond psychological disturbance pattern in the matters of their identity. The binary set of gender is so comfortably aligned with our minds that even assuming some other sets seems bizarre. Various categories of non-conformers face societal hatred and even subjected to all kinds of ill-treatments.

The present research on the topic *"Social Construction of Gender Roles And Identity Formation Among Gender Non-conformers: A Sociological Study of LGBT in Delhi City"* is an attempt to look at sexual and gender identity in a broader sense and is inclusive of both temporal and perennial factors determining the development of different orientation patterns and how they are important when looked at societally. The approach primarily focuses on the social construction of gender reality and how it is perceived in different cultures and societies.

IMPORTANCEOF THE STUDY

The research will give leads about the nature of gender non-conformers individuals and communities popularly called as LGBT's who search a way to assimilate in the mainstream but the society in its attempt to maintain equilibrium is putting these to margins. The study will also try to explore the struggle for space and identity in society between different categories and especially among LGBTs.

The study will also highlight the problems faced by the LGBT community and what can be done by the governments to relieve them and how society should be moulded to accommodate LGBT communities as a form of diversity and not in the form of any deviation.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

1. To study the socio-economic status of LGBTs in Delhi.
2. To analyze the Social Construction of gender non-conformers and their identity formation in Delhi.
3. To map-out the constraints of the society on *Gender non-conformers* (LGBT)
4. To study the relationships established amongst the LGBTs in Delhi.
5. To study the conflicts amongst homosexuals and transgenders in Delhi.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. What is the socio-economic status of LGBTs in Delhi?
2. How does the gender identity is socially constructed among gender non-conformers?
3. What are the constraints of the society towards gender non-conformers (LGBTs)?
4. What kinds of relationships are established amongst the LGBTs in Delhi?
5. What are the nature and the causes of conflicts amongst homosexuals and transgenders in Delhi?

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Area/Universe

Setting of the study will be The National Capital Delhi. The reason for selection ofDelhi for the study is the presence of cosmopolitan population in the area which represents both the advanced and conservative mindsets.

Research Design: The proposed research would be descriptive and exploratory in nature.

Sources of Data Collection

The data will be collected from both primary and secondary sources. Secondary sources used in the study will be derived from census data, government public records, reports of international bodies (UDHR, Amnesty International, etc), published peer reviewed research articles, review articles, research books, books etc.

Sample Size and Composition

The sample will be taken from all categories of LGBTs. Among all the categories the enumeration of transgenders (T) is available in the Census data of 2011. Total population of transgender in India in Census of 2011 is 4,87,803 and the population in the Union Territory of Delhi is 4213 which is 0.86 % of national population of transgenders. A **10%**sample of **n=421** will be drawnrandomly.

For LGB (Lesbian, gay, and bisexual)categories of gender non-conformerssnowball sampling method will be used.

Tools of Data Collection

- A**structured interview schedule** will be prepared with both open and close ended questions. The study will also be supplemented by**observation** and **case studies.**
- Use of audio tapes with properconfidentiality and consent of the respondents will be used.

TENTATIVE CHAPTERIZATION

1. CHAPTER 1
   - Introduction
   - Review of Literature
   - Statement of Problem
   - Importance of the Research
   - Research Objectives

- Research Questions
- Research Methodology

2. CHAPTER 2
   - Socio-economic status of LGBTs in Delhi.
3. CHAPTER 3
   - Social construction of gender non-conformers and their identity formation in Delhi.
4. CHAPTER 4
   - Constraints of the society on *Gender non-conformers* (LGBT).
5. CHAPTER 5
   - Relationships established amongst LGBTs in Delhi
6. CHAPTER 6
   - Conflicts amongst homosexuals and transgenders in Delhi.
7. CONCLUSION
8. APPENDIX
9. REFERENCES

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